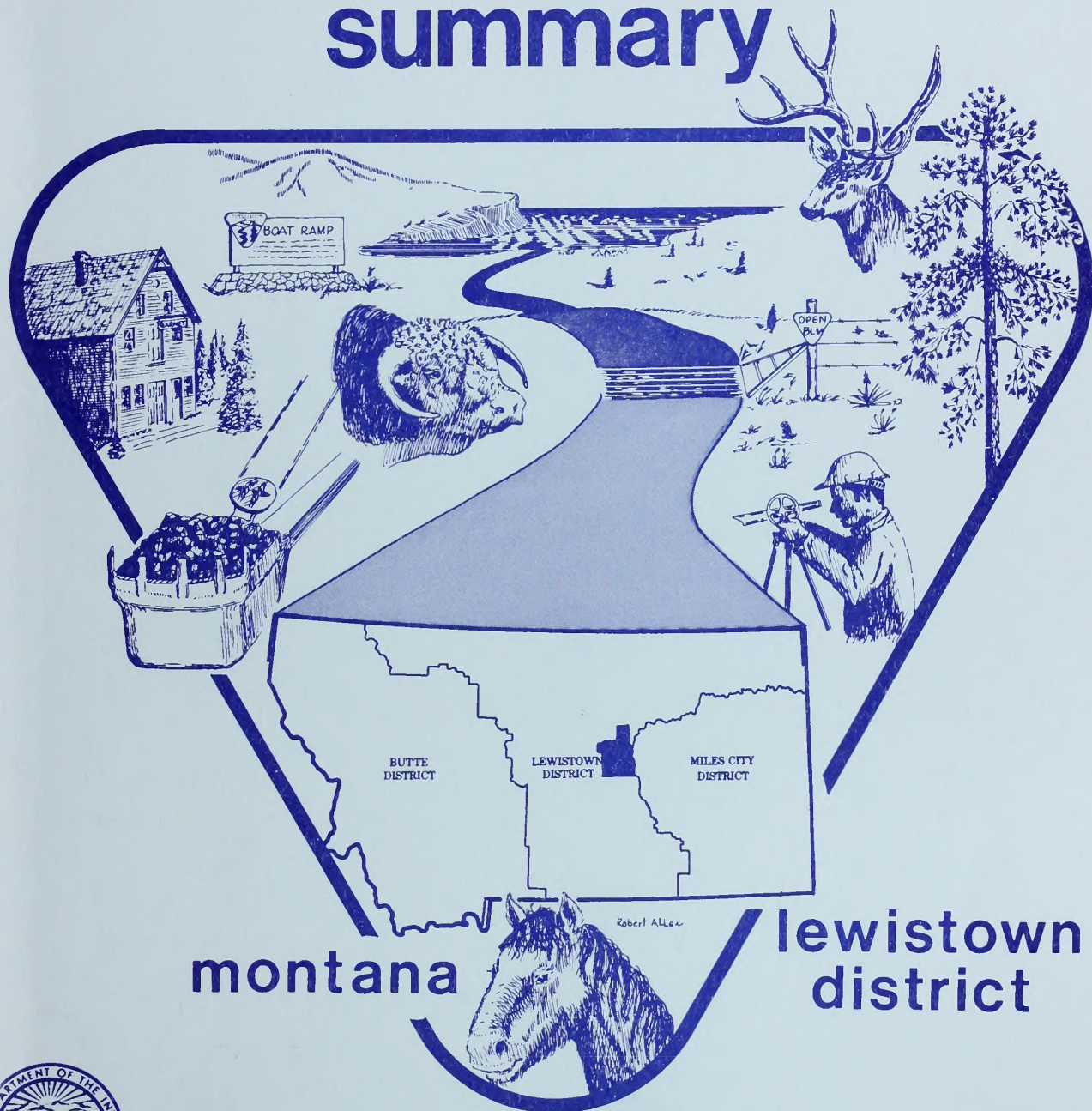




petroleum

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN summary



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1978

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Preface

The Bureau of Land Management's Montana State organization manages resources on almost 8.4 million acres of surface land and 55 million acres of subsurface minerals in Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota. The Lewistown District Office is responsible for more than 3.8 million surface and 8.1 million subsurface acres. These public lands are used by many people for a variety of activities. It is BLM's responsibility to develop coordinated land use allocations specifying the guidelines, constraints, and criteria for the utilization or protection of the public's resources.

To better prepare for present and future demands on public lands, BLM has developed land use plans for many areas of the state. This publication contains a summary of the land use decisions for approximately 334,000 acres of public lands in the Petroleum Planning Unit.

These decisions, the approved multiple use recommendations of BLM resource specialists and managers, were made after gathering all available resource data, and requesting the viewpoints of local citizens and the user public. Each rancher with an allotment on public lands within the planning unit was contacted during the allotment management plan inventory. Most of the tracts of public land were subject to on-the-ground review.

Several agencies, including Montana Fish and Game, Soil Conservation Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Petroleum County have furnished data and assistance in this project. Additional valuable input has been obtained by incidental contacts with various interested resource users during the course of development of the planning system over the last several years. Public meetings in Winnett in 1972 and 1973 and in Lewistown in 1978 were held for the purpose of receiving public comments on the multiple use recommendations. By design, the decisions are flexible so they can deal with new demands or new conditions that may arise. They will be updated or revised as necessary to help keep this management framework plan current and effective. Any major changes in this plan will be subject to public review and comment.

This report is a summary document of the total planning process. Detailed maps, physical resource data, and social and economic data are not included in this report. These materials, as well as the other components of BLM's land use planning process, are available for public review during regular business hours at the Lewistown District Office. If you wish to review these documents, please make an appointment so that we can have someone available to discuss them with you.

My staff and I thank everyone who assisted in this effort, especially those who attended our public meetings or contributed to the final product. The assistance received was invaluable in developing this plan and formulating the final decisions.

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Introduction

BLM Planning System

Under the Bureau's planning system, detailed information is gathered and management decisions are developed in eight categories. These categories are lands, minerals, timber, range, watershed, wildlife habitat, recreation, and cultural resources. In order to meet the needs of its diverse public land users, BLM must effectively balance the management of these resources. Under the concept of multiple use management, all potential uses of the public's resources are evaluated before a final management plan is developed and implemented.

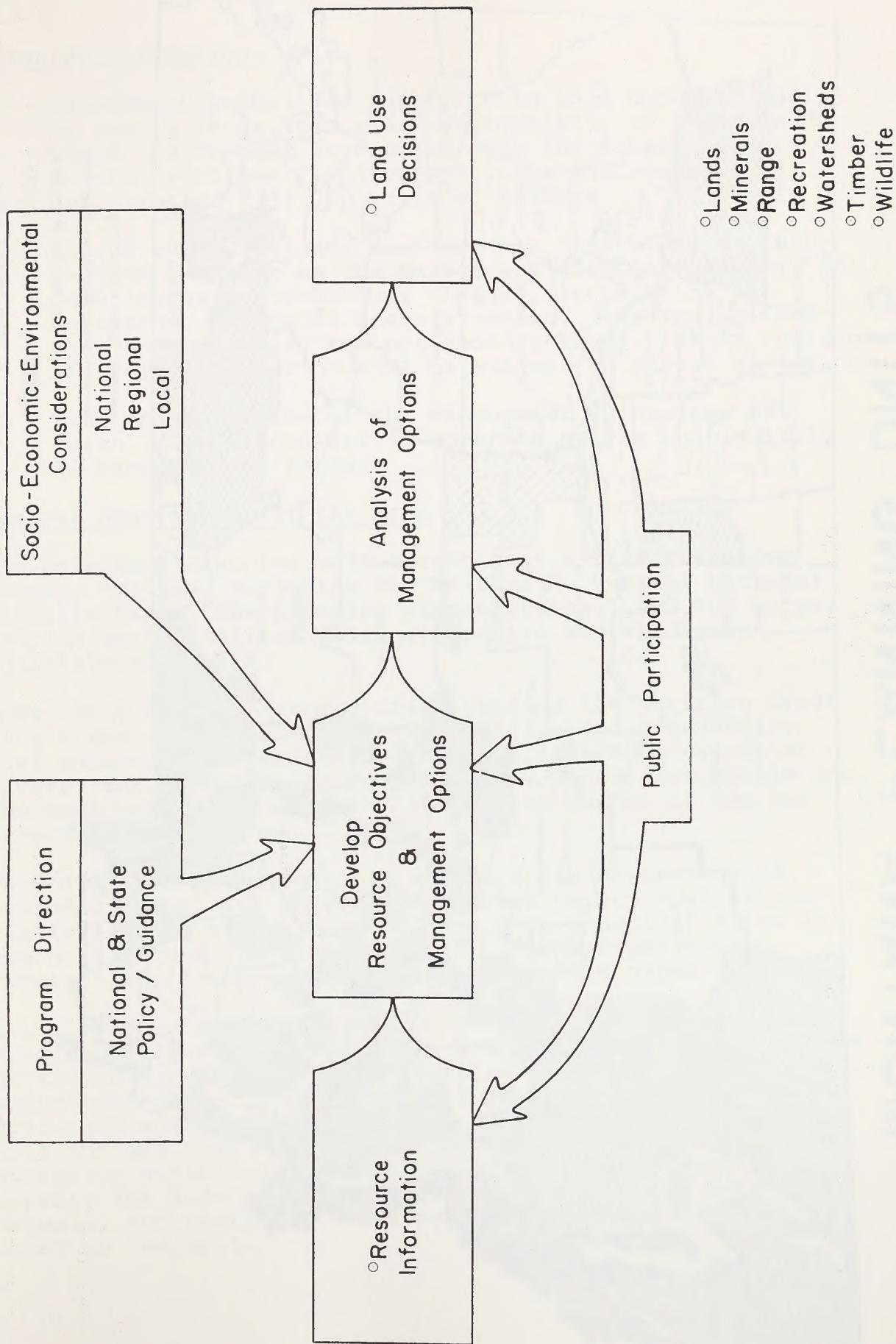
The Bureau of Land Management has developed its land use planning system with three major components:

Program Direction
Resource Information
Management Decisions

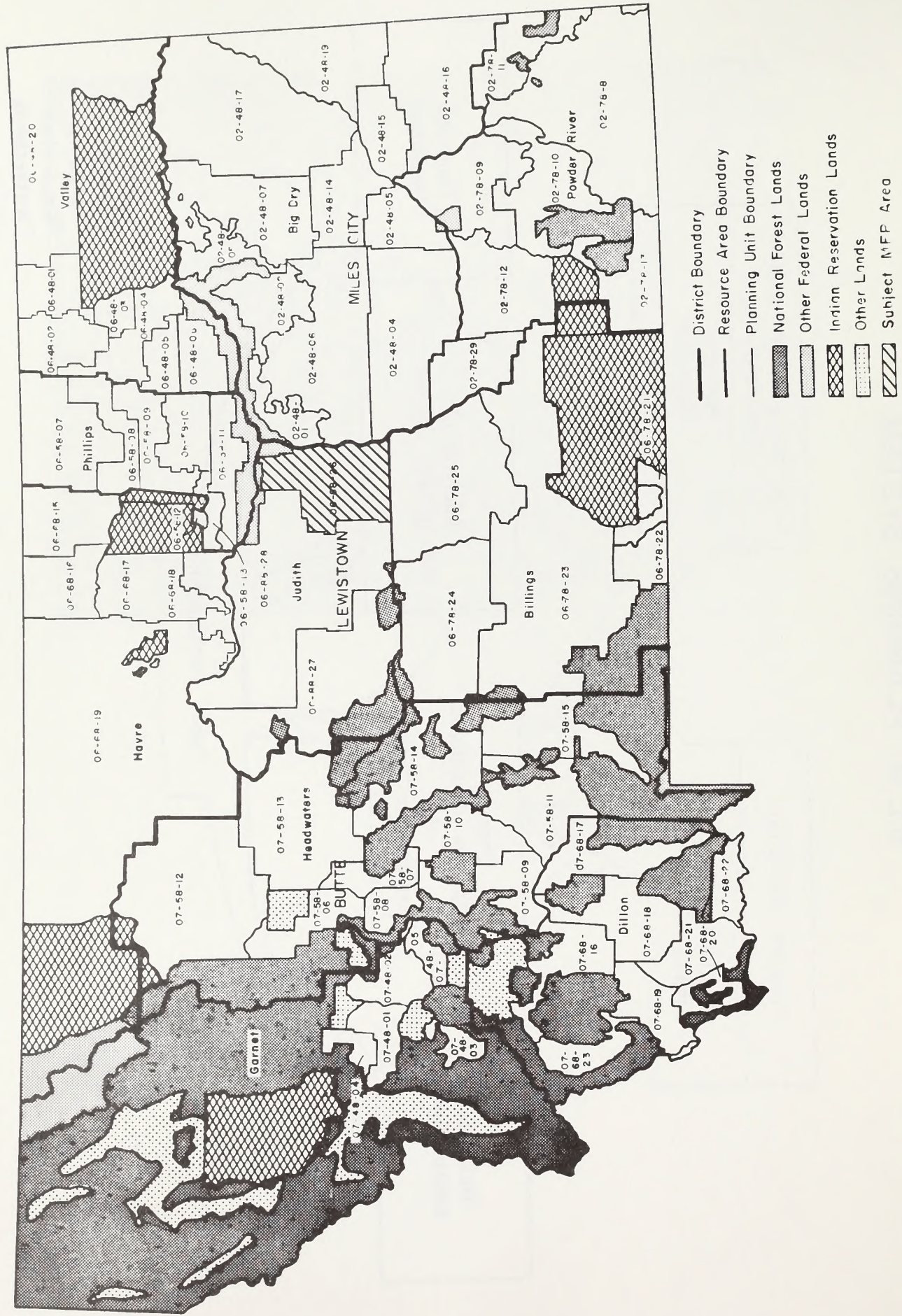
1. Program Direction. General program direction, policies, goals, and priorities are set by the President, Congress, and the Secretary of the Interior. These directions are expressed in executive orders, laws, regulations, and other documents.
2. Resource Information. In initiating this phase of the planning system, BLM specialists gather all of the available land and resource information relative to the region under study. Each resource specialist--the forester, range conservationist, minerals specialist, watershed specialist, etc.--studies the planning area to determine current condition, use, trends, and problems concerning his resource responsibility. This analysis is then further developed to identify maximum potential for the resource use without consideration of competing or conflicting uses. The importance of this step is that each potential is considered individually. In addition, socio-economic data is gathered and analyzed to facilitate the evaluation of land use alternatives generated by the planning system. In compiling the above information, the Bureau contacts all known interests to be certain that all available data has been obtained.

3. Management Decisions. The next phase of the planning system is designed to resolve resource use conflicts and to provide basic guidelines for the use and management of the public lands under study. This is the heart of the planning system. At this stage, each resource specialist prepares objectives and outlines specific proposals for the optimum use of his resource based on current technology, Bureau guidelines, and the socio-economic needs of the region. Each individual resource proposal is then fully documented and individually presented utilizing a map and overlay system. At this point, conflicts between various resource proposals and possible multiple use solutions are identified through careful analysis and utilization of narratives, maps, and overlays. Based on comments and information received through public participation, BLM managers are often able to develop modified as well as additional land use alternatives and multiple use solutions. The impacts of each of these alternatives are identified and analyzed to facilitate the selection of the best mix of uses. A comprehensive land use plan is then developed and adopted. Coordinated land use allocations, guidelines, constraints, and criteria for utilization are intrinsic to this plan.

B.L.M. PLANNING SYSTEM



MONTANA PLANNING UNITS



Planning Assumptions

1. Management guidelines set forth in this document apply to public lands and, where appropriate, to those lands where the Federal Government owns the mineral estate. In the Petroleum Planning Unit, the BLM administers approximately 334,000 acres of surface.
2. All of the guidelines developed in this study are subject to revision as the management climate changes. As data improves, technology changes, legislation is developed, or social demands change, these guidelines will be revised to reflect those changes. Major revisions in program direction will be subject to public review.
3. The implementation of the management guidelines set forth in this document is governed by the availability of manpower and funds.

General Description of the Area

The Petroleum Planning Unit encompasses all of Petroleum County, Montana, excluding the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Range. The planning area contains 1,003,000 acres, 334,000 acres (33%) of which are public surface lands administered by BLM.

Topography of the planning area typifies the Northern Great Plains region, with gently rolling hills and a generally flat aspect, with smaller drainages oriented to two major rivers, the Missouri and Musselshell. Slopes are gentle for the most part, with steeper "breaks" as either of the two rivers are approached.

Vegetation is predominately Northern Plains species of grasses, forbs, and shrubs. Sagebrush covers much of the flatter areas, with greasewood and some broadleaf trees in the major creek and river bottoms. The steeper river "breaks" area supports ponderosa pine and juniper stands.

Relatively large populations of game and non-game wildlife species use the area. Antelope and mule deer range over the entire unit; elk inhabit the northern "breaks" portion and white-tailed deer are spread through the brush filled major drainages and farmlands. Upland game birds in the planning unit include sage and sharp-tailed grouse, pheasant, and Hungarian partridge. Predators, most commonly coyotes, inhabit the area also. A variety of song birds, small animals, and raptorial birds such as hawks and eagles also occur in the unit.

Winnett, the county seat, is the largest community in the planning unit. The local economy is almost wholly dependent on range livestock production. Almost every ranch operation in the unit depends to some extent on public lands for livestock forage.



Topography in the planning unit consists of a generally flat aspect with gently rolling hills.

Major Issues and Problems

The major issue in this planning unit is livestock grazing on public land. The issue reached national significance several years ago with the NRDC vs. Morton court case, which defined livestock grazing as a major environmental impact and required an Environmental Impact Statement to assess the damages. The statement for this planning unit is currently being written in Billings, Montana, and should be available within one year.

Other issues that surfaced from public input were control vs. non-control of predators and prairie dogs, sagebrush retention for wildlife, and livestock use vs. non-use in key wildlife areas.

No major socio-economic issues were identified.



The Mussellshell River bounds the eastern edge of the planning unit--a shallow, meandering stream bordered by cottonwoods and willows, some hay and grain croplands, and native range.

LANDS

Background

Land ownership in the Petroleum Planning Unit consists of a mixture of private, state, and federal lands (as shown on the base map).

LAND OWNERSHIP PETROLEUM PLANNING UNIT

<u>Administrative Agency</u>		<u>Acreage</u>	<u>% of Total Acre.</u>
Public	Bureau of Land Mgmt.	334,000	33%
Private	Private	608,000	61%
State	State of Montana	61,000	6%
TOTALS		1,003,000	100%

Since the enactment of Public Law 94-223, lands within the boundary of the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Range are administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service and are not included in the Petroleum Planning Unit.

BLM's land program is responsible for the administration of public land laws. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) has provided the Bureau's Land and Realty Specialists with directives for identifying public lands, review of withdrawals and use authorization. As no comprehensive land use plan has been developed by Petroleum County, BLM will continue to work with county officials to maintain consistent land decisions.

Lands program activities include such actions as: planning, classification, appraisal, exchanges, sales, land record maintenance, administration of leases, rights-of-way, and land use permits. BLM provides lands for community expansion and other public purposes. The recent transfer, by exchange, of the Winnett sanitary fill to Petroleum County is an example of land ownership change to fulfill an identified public need.

Resource Decision and Rationale

1. Rights-of-Way

- a. Confine future utility expansion to existing utility system corridors whenever practical.

By confining rights-of-way to corridors there is a minimum impact on the total environment. Scenic, wildlife, and aesthetic values can be better protected.

- b. Issue right-of-way authorizations in other areas subject to environmental assessment, surface protection, and rehabilitation stipulations.

Public land laws provide for rights-of-way with adequate stipulations to protect the environment and allow proper management of the land's resources.

2. Disposal

- a. Provide land for public purposes to local government agencies or non-profit organizations when a demonstrated need exists.
- b. Lands that are not identified as necessary for existing or proposed BLM programs may be considered for disposal by exchange. First consideration will be exchanges which benefit management programs, such as critical wildlife habitat.

According to FLMPA, "the public lands shall be retained in federal ownership, unless as a result of the land use planning procedures . . . it is determined that disposal of a particular parcel will serve the national interests."

Environmental Overview

The concentration of utility rights-of-way would prevent many of the impacts associated with intrusions into largely undisturbed areas. Public comment favored this approach. Public response also favored disposal by exchange rather than sale. Exchange procedures have been simplified under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

MINERALS

Background

The minerals program includes the disposal of minerals by lease, license, or permit; coordination of minerals development with other lands; the assurance of rehabilitating mined lands; as well as evaluating and processing minerals patent applications and appraisals. Minerals on public land are categorized by law as:

Locatable - those that may be "staked" and claimed under the General Mining Law of 1872. These are mainly metals such as gold, silver, lead, copper, zinc, and uranium, but also include some non-metallic minerals such as mica and asbestos.

Salable - those that may be sold under the Material Sale Act of 1947. Included are common varieties of sand, gravel, and stone.

Leasable - those that may be leased under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, such as oil and gas, coal, oil shale, phosphate, sodium, potassium, and geothermal steam.

There are two producing oil fields in the planning unit, the Cat Creek (West Dome) and the Mosby, and one shut-in field, Rattlesnake Butte. Many wells have been drilled in the vicinity of Cat Creek structure; however, as of 1975 only 49 were listed as producing. The known reservoir is nearly depleted. Twenty-three wells have been drilled in the planning unit since 1970 in an effort to locate new reserves.

Sand, gravel, and, to a lesser degree, clay also exist in the planning unit. Bentonite occurs within several formations, but has not been commercially developed.

Resource Decision and Rationale

1. Oil and Gas

- a. Allow leasing, exploration, and development of federally owned oil and gas on both public land and privately owned land having oil and gas reserved to the United States. Provide adequate protection for other resource values without unduly restricting oil and gas operations.



The presence of producing oil fields in the area will continue to incite exploration activity throughout the planning unit.

Excepted lands: Identified sharptail/sage grouse leks and nesting areas from February 1 to July 1, prairie dog towns, endangered species habitat, creek bottoms, and areas within 100 feet of flood plains, proposed campground sites, VRM Class I, II, and III areas, frail lands, high erosion areas, and slopes greater than 15%. Special stipulations may be used, on a case-by-case basis, to allow exploration on the excepted lands.

The possibility of undiscovered petroleum and gas reserves in the planning unit is high. In order for the United States to pursue a policy of energy independence, it is necessary to find new domestic sources of oil and gas. Management will provide adequate surface protection provisions.

2. Sand and Gravel

- a. Insure that common variety mineral materials such as sand and gravel are available for disposal. In addition, a community sand and gravel pit on public land is proposed in the vicinity of Winnett to discourage unauthorized pits.

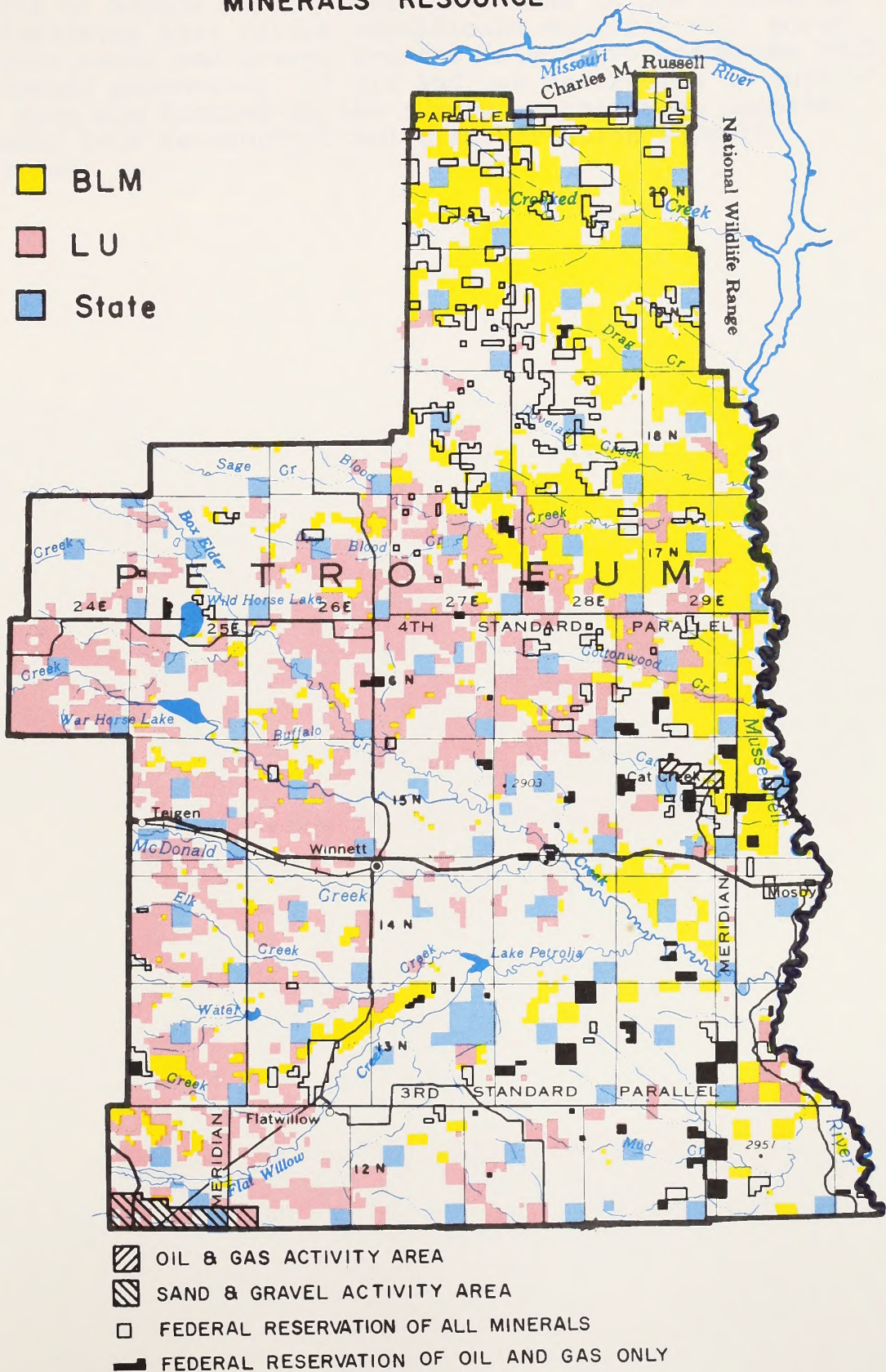
There is local demand for sand and gravel use in construction and maintenance for driveways and private roads. The establishment of a community sand and gravel pit will alleviate surface disturbance in areas where such development would conflict with other resources.

3. Koalin, Clay, Bentonite

- a. Determine the extent of koalin, aluminous clay, and bentonite deposits on public lands and insure their availability for possible future development.

Although these commodities are not presently important resources in the planning unit, they may become valuable resources in the future. All three are non-renewable and reserves in other parts of the nation will eventually be mined out.

PETROLEUM PLANNING UNIT MINERALS RESOURCE



Environmental Overview

The lack of highly mineralized formations in the Petroleum unit indicates that little significant activity will occur. Oil, gas, sand, and gravel are the only known resources with development potential. If oil and gas reservoirs of sufficient size are located in the future, significant impacts may occur from development and transportation support facilities.

FOREST PRODUCTS

Background

The forestry program includes forest management and development as well as disease and pest control. This involves inventory, evaluation, timber management, sale of forest products such as timber, posts, poles, and other vegetative products from forest lands, timber trespass, and pest and disease control programs.

The forest resource on public lands in this unit is limited. The unit contains approximately 98,000 acres of conifer and juniper vegetative types. None are classified as productive forest lands (capable of effective timber production on a sustained yield basis).

The timber in this unit is limited to low quality ponderosa pine and Douglas fir. Rocky Mountain juniper is also found in this planning unit. Conifer stands are scattered throughout the "breaks" of the Missouri and Musselshell Rivers. Timber stands in the breaks are found on steep slopes and unstable soils. Growth rates are slow due to lack of moisture and nutrients.

All forested lands are valuable for wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and aesthetics. Deer, elk, small game, and birds use these areas extensively. Tree roots hold soil in place, helping to control erosion. The shade also delays snowmelt. This lengthens the runoff-period and further reduces soil movement. Trees are aesthetically valuable because they provide variety to scenic views. This is especially true in the river "breaks" areas.

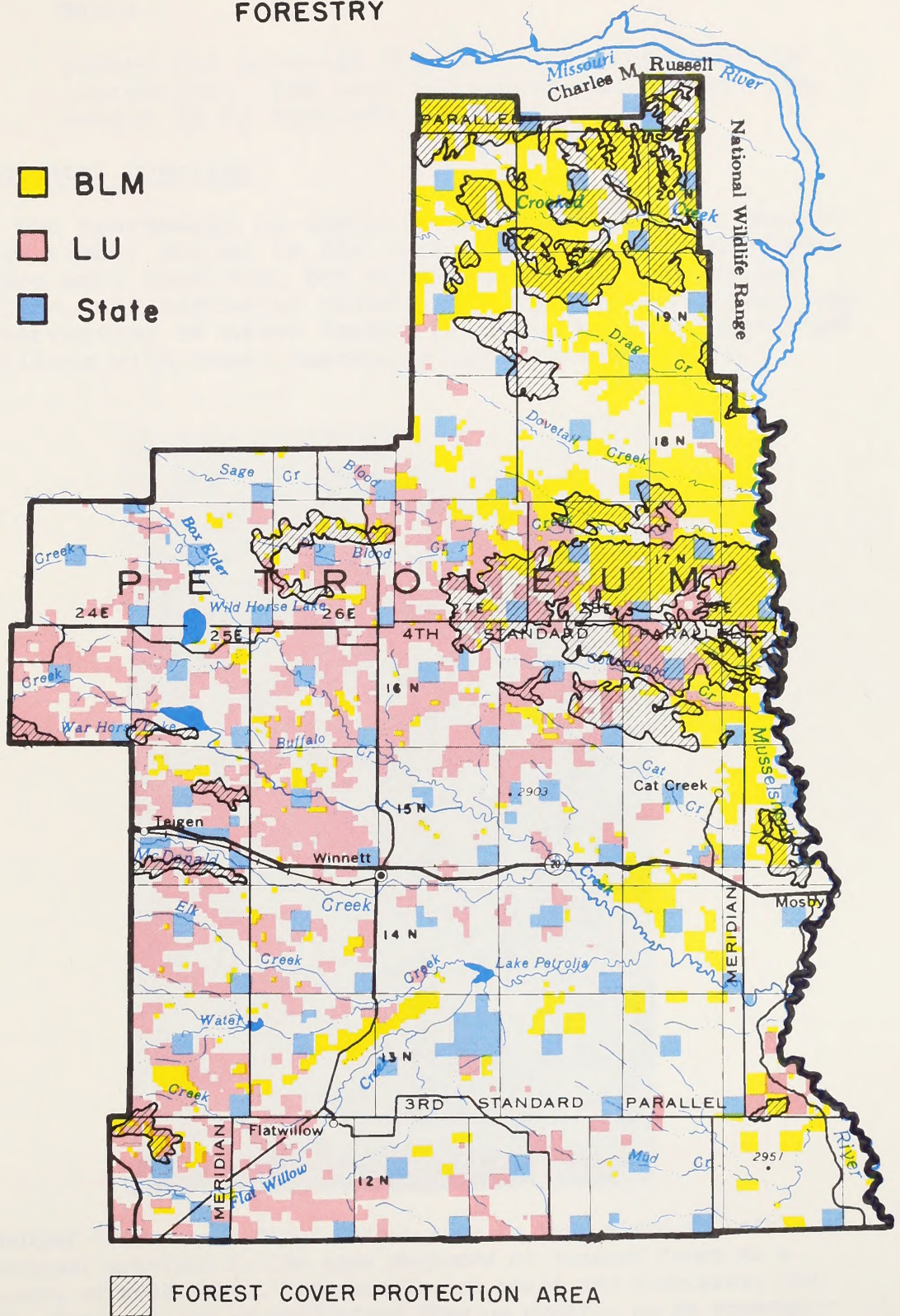
Resource Decisions and Rationale

1. Management

- a. Harvest minor forest products (posts poles, Christmas trees, and fuel wood) to meet local demand. Sale areas will be confined to those served by existing roads. Saw timber will not be harvested due to erosion susceptibility caused by equipment. Trees with significant wildlife values will not be cut.

There is a small continuing demand for these products from the planning unit. Products can be harvested for local consumption where environmental considerations permit.

PETROLEUM PLANNING UNIT FORESTRY



- b. Issue free-use permits for fuelwood (dead and/or down) materials for personal use on a demand basis.

Demand for personal fuelwood for fireplaces is increasing. The most efficient way to meet the demand is by free-use permit.

Environmental Overview

Due to the sparseness of timbered areas and lack of productive saw timber stands in the unit, the existing forested areas are more important for wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and aesthetic values than wood fiber production. Local harvesting of minor forest products will be permitted as conflicts with other resources will be negligible.



Juniper trees are a major forest type in this planning unit. Original settlers in the area depended on juniper trees as a source of wood posts. The stands are small and scattered, and the trees are not of sufficient size or quality to be economically important today.

RANGE

Background

The range program includes inventory, evaluation, and management of the vegetative resource on public lands as used by domestic livestock, wild horses, burrows, and other grazing animals. The program involves authorization and supervising grazing use, developing and maintaining supporting livestock management facilities such as fences and reservoirs, and protecting public rangelands from weed infestations, pests, and diseases. BLM is developing livestock grazing management plans for the majority of public lands and is planning to complete environmental statements on all lands where domestic livestock grazing is authorized.

Livestock grazing is an important economic activity in the Petroleum Planning Unit. The local economy of the area is dependent on a range economy.

Currently administered under the Taylor Grazing Act are 67,054 animal unit months (AUMs) of forage on public land in the planning unit. Approximately 19,000 head of livestock are authorized to graze BLM administered land.

There are five existing allotment management plans (AMPs) in the planning unit (see map page 19). Forty-four range allotments in the Petroleum Planning Unit are designated as feasible for intensive livestock management under allotment management plans.

BLM range program's goal is to improve or maintain existing range conditions and available forage for livestock on public land. Grazing management systems proposed as a means of reaching this goal will be finalized under Bureau policy and guidelines to insure compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and protection of other resources.

Resource Decisions and Rationale

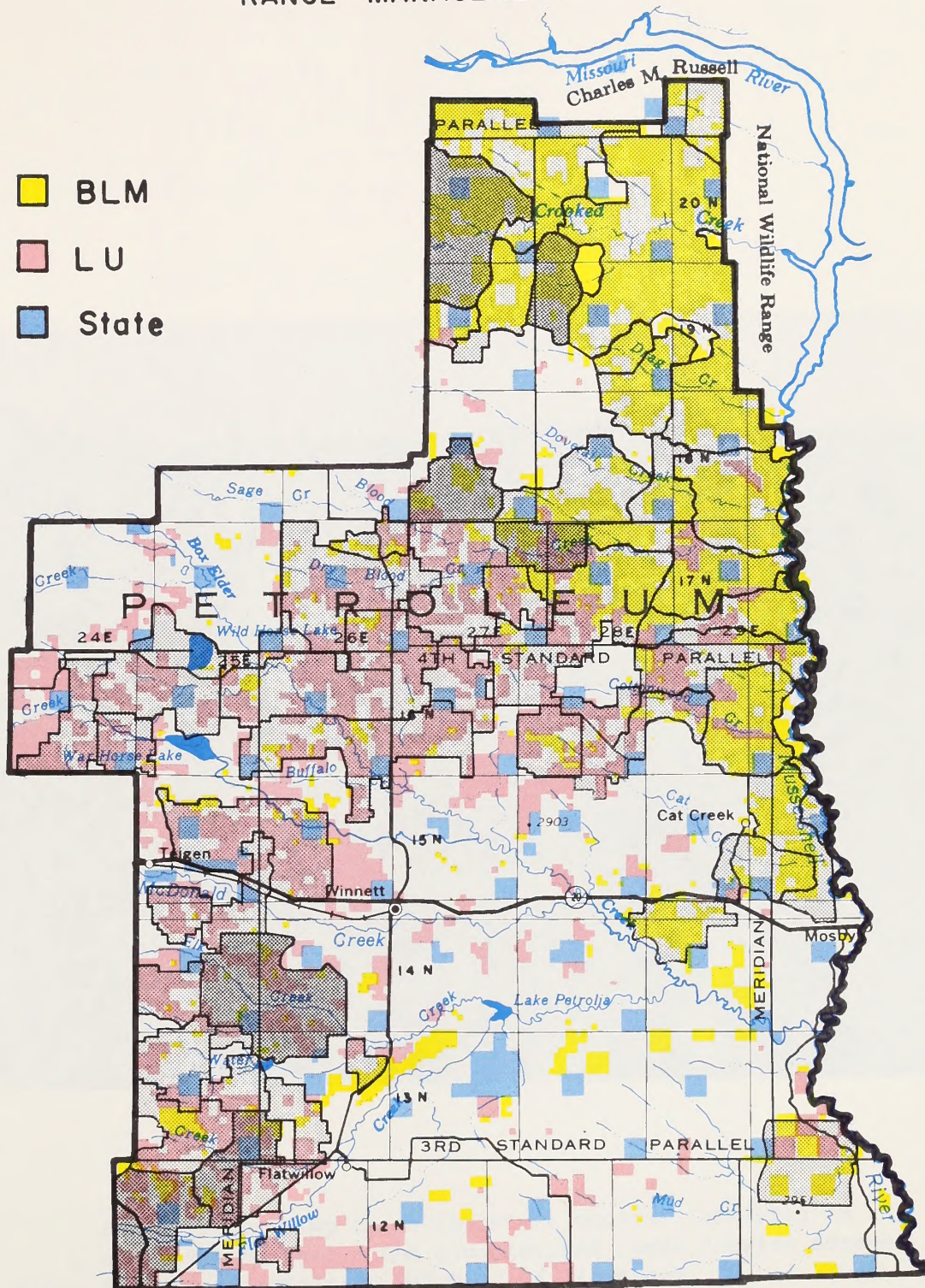
1. Existing Allotment Management Plans

- a. Continue to issue grazing authorizations in accordance with existing AMPs on five allotments.

Allotment evaluations and studies indicate that multiple use objectives outlined in the AMPs are being met. Range users are satisfied with the results from a forage and livestock production standpoint.

PETROLEUM PLANNING UNIT RANGE MANAGEMENT

- BLM
- LU
- State



- Existing AMP's
- Proposed AMP's
- Non AMP's



Livestock grazing is an important economic activity in the planning unit. BLM administered lands provide forage for approximately 19,000 head of livestock.

2. Implementation of Allotment Management Plans

a. Implement AMPs on 44 allotments.

Recent inventories of these allotments have shown adequate public land and resources present on each to justify expenditure of public funds for intensive management systems. Such management may require the development of new stockwater reservoirs, wells, and fences.

3. Livestock Grazing on Non-AMP Allotments

a. Issue non-AMP livestock permits or leases on the remaining 220 tracts of public land.

These allotments contain small amounts of public land relative to private ownership. The ability and practicality of regulating livestock use in these areas is marginal.

4. Fire Suppression Plan

a. Develop a modified fire suppression plan for the Missouri River "breaks" area which takes into account both the positive and negative effects of fire and fire control activities.



Reservoirs are a common form of livestock water in most of the planning unit. Besides providing water for grazing animals, reservoirs may be important as waterfowl habitat, fisheries, and watershed protection.

The timbered Missouri Breaks is an area in which fire has played an important function in improved livestock forage and wildlife habitat. Because fire can serve a beneficial role in this situation, a modified fire suppression plan should be developed which takes into account the benefits as well as deleterious effects.

Environmental Overview

Grazing systems provided for in the existing AMPs have proven to be an effective way of improving the public lands. Since the objectives are being met, it is logical to continue with these plans as has been done in the past. The 44 new allotment management plans to be implemented were developed within other resource objectives and restrictions, particularly wildlife habitat directives. Their implementation will provide an initial allocation of 44,024 AUMs of forage for 12,775 cattle, 1,000 sheep, and 8 horses. This is approximately 66% of the forage provided by public lands in the Petroleum unit. The 220 custodial tracts are in allotments that contain small amounts of public land relative to private land holdings. The ability and practicality of regulating livestock use in these areas is marginal. Licensing and permit procedures combined with a system of regular inspection and resource condition inventory will be necessary to protect public values.

WATERSHED

Background

BLM is responsible for managing public land watersheds to stabilize soils, produce water, and enhance water quality. Watershed specialists deal with problems of erosion, water quality, and water yield of both surface and subsurface sources. Closely coordinated management of all resources and activity operations is stressed to maintain or improve watershed condition.

The majority of soils in the Petroleum Planning Unit are derived from sedimentary parent material (shale). These soils are susceptible to erosion when disturbed or exposed to prolonged wetting. Precipitation averages 11-12 inches per year.

Resource Decision and Rationale

1. Management

- a. Implement grazing systems on those allotments identified as suitable.

Soils in the planning unit are easily eroded when exposed to weathering elements. Plant cover on these soils is necessary to maintain soil bonding and litter to provide protection. Grazing systems can be designed to increase vigor and litter production.

- b. Infrequently used roads should be closed if they fulfill no multiple resource need and create watershed problems.

Runoff and erosion from roads is especially damaging on finer textured soils with slopes of 30 percent or more. Closure of these roads would benefit the watershed program by reducing the number of vehicles in fragile areas.

- c. In the critical erosion classification areas of the unit, all vegetative increases in forage will be allocated to watershed rather than livestock or wildlife until the soil is stabilized, then no more than 20 percent of the vegetative increases will be allocated.



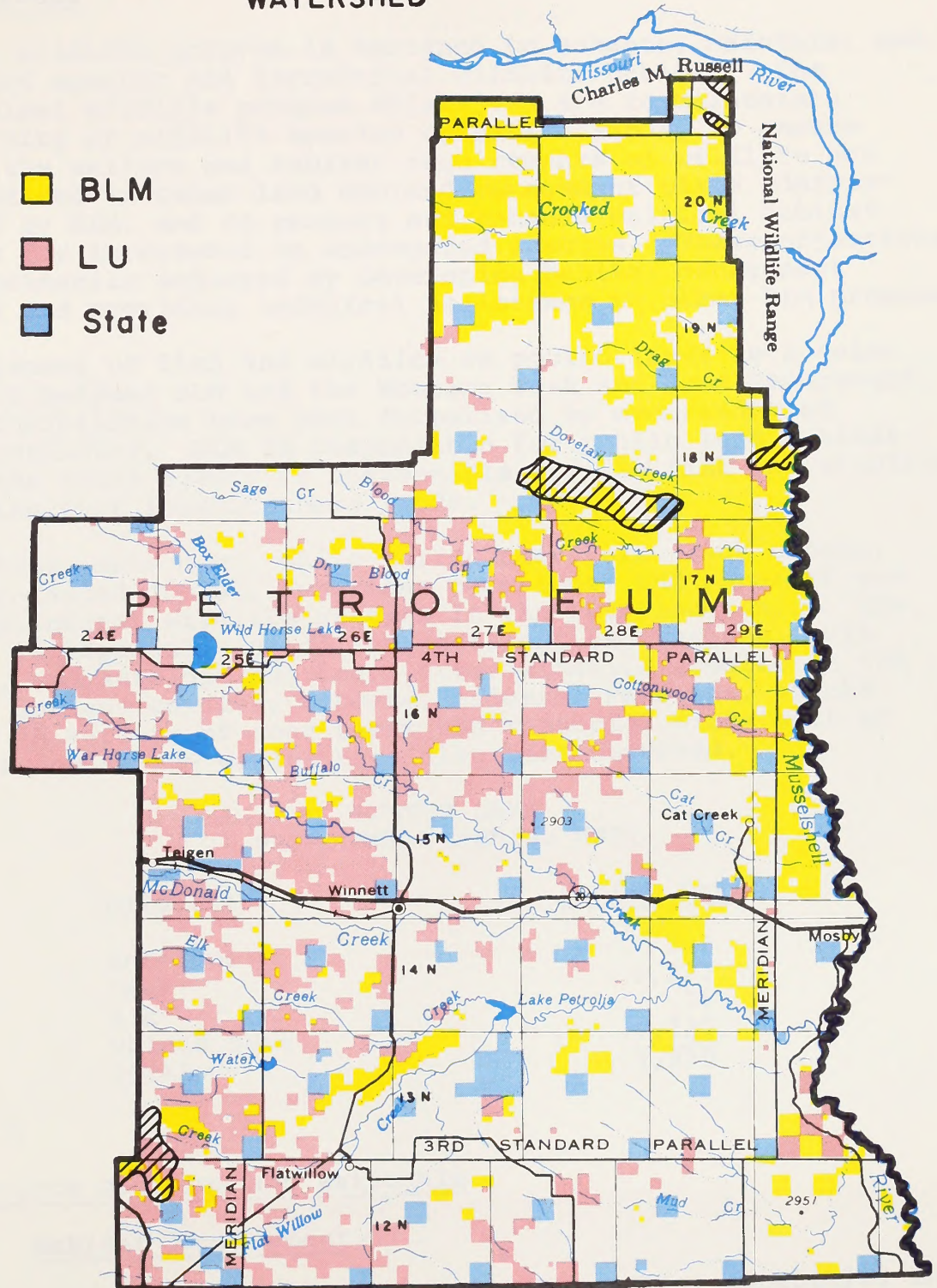
Natural geologic erosion along drainages in the planning unit accounts for areas of severe or critical erosion conditions.

By increasing ground cover and plant density, the watershed will become more stabilized and erosion and sediment rates will decrease.

Environmental Overview

The proposed watershed management decisions will lead to improving soil and vegetative cover and water quality. Moderating stipulations and rehabilitation standards are included in these decisions. Overall, environmental quality will be enhanced.

PETROLEUM PLANNING UNIT WATERSHED



CRITICAL EROSION AREAS

WILDLIFE

Background

BLM's wildlife program is designed to enhance, maintain, and protect aquatic and terrestrial wildlife habitat. The principal wildlife program objectives are to maintain a diversity of wildlife species on public lands, to ensure that the welfare and habitat requirements of wildlife are considered in other land use and management plans administered by BLM, and to protect and enhance critical habitat areas for threatened or endangered species. These objectives are primarily achieved by developing habitat management plans and providing technical assistance to other BLM programs.

Management of fish and wildlife on public lands is a joint effort between BLM and the Montana Fish and Game Department. Responsibilities have been formalized by memorandum of understanding. BLM is responsible for public land habitat and the state agency is responsible for the fish and wildlife species that inhabit these lands.

Antelope, mule deer, white-tailed deer, elk, sage grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, Hungarian partridge, and pheasant are the principal wildlife species in the Petroleum unit. The unit is especially noted for excellent sage grouse, mule deer, and antelope hunting. Other wildlife species in the unit include coyotes, bobcats, badgers, raccoons, skunks, etc. A variety of song birds and raptorial birds such as hawks, owls, and eagles have also been observed.

HUNTER DAYS PETROLEUM PLANNING UNIT

<u>Wildlife</u>	<u>Hunter Days*</u>
Antelope	362
Deer	3,222
Elk	79
Upland Game	1,327
TOTAL	4,990

*1975

Resource Decision and Rationale

1. Habitat Improvement

- a. Improve the vigor of brush species, especially in coulee bottoms, by removing livestock use as soon



Improving the vigor of brush species in coulee bottoms will improve wildlife habitat in the planning unit.

as possible in the fall on deer, antelope, and sage grouse ranges.

Browse plants are used by most wildlife species for food, cover, or both. Livestock has a large impact on browse plants. Limitations on livestock grazing reduce consumption of browse species by livestock.

- b. New fences on public land will be located and designed to allow movement of antelope. Existing fences will be modified to allow antelope movement.

Antelope are found throughout the planning unit. Does "fawn" in the rougher portions of the "breaks" in the spring, consequently fences providing movement of antelope are necessary.

- c. Develop a modified fire suppression plan for the Missouri River "breaks" area which takes into account the beneficial and adverse effects of fire and fire control activities.

The timbered Missouri Breaks is an area in which fire has played an important function in improved livestock forage and wildlife habitat. Because fire can serve a beneficial role in this situation, a modified fire suppression plan should be developed which takes into account the benefits as well as damaging effects.

2. Habitat Maintenance

- a. Allow for control of sagebrush after 10 years of AMP implementation has failed to show an improvement in ecological range condition and then only after a loss of sagebrush has shown not to be detrimental to existing populations of wildlife species.

Intensive research has demonstrated the total dependence of sage grouse on sage as a food and cover source. Antelope and deer also depend on sage as a food source during winter months.

- b. Limit artificial land treatment practices on public lands.

Artificial land treatments provide a radical change to habitat over a short period of time. Habitat and/or behavioral adjustments by wildlife to change can only take place over a long period of time, if at all.

- c. Fence selected reservoirs that support a good fishery and develop supplemental livestock watering facilities, if needed.

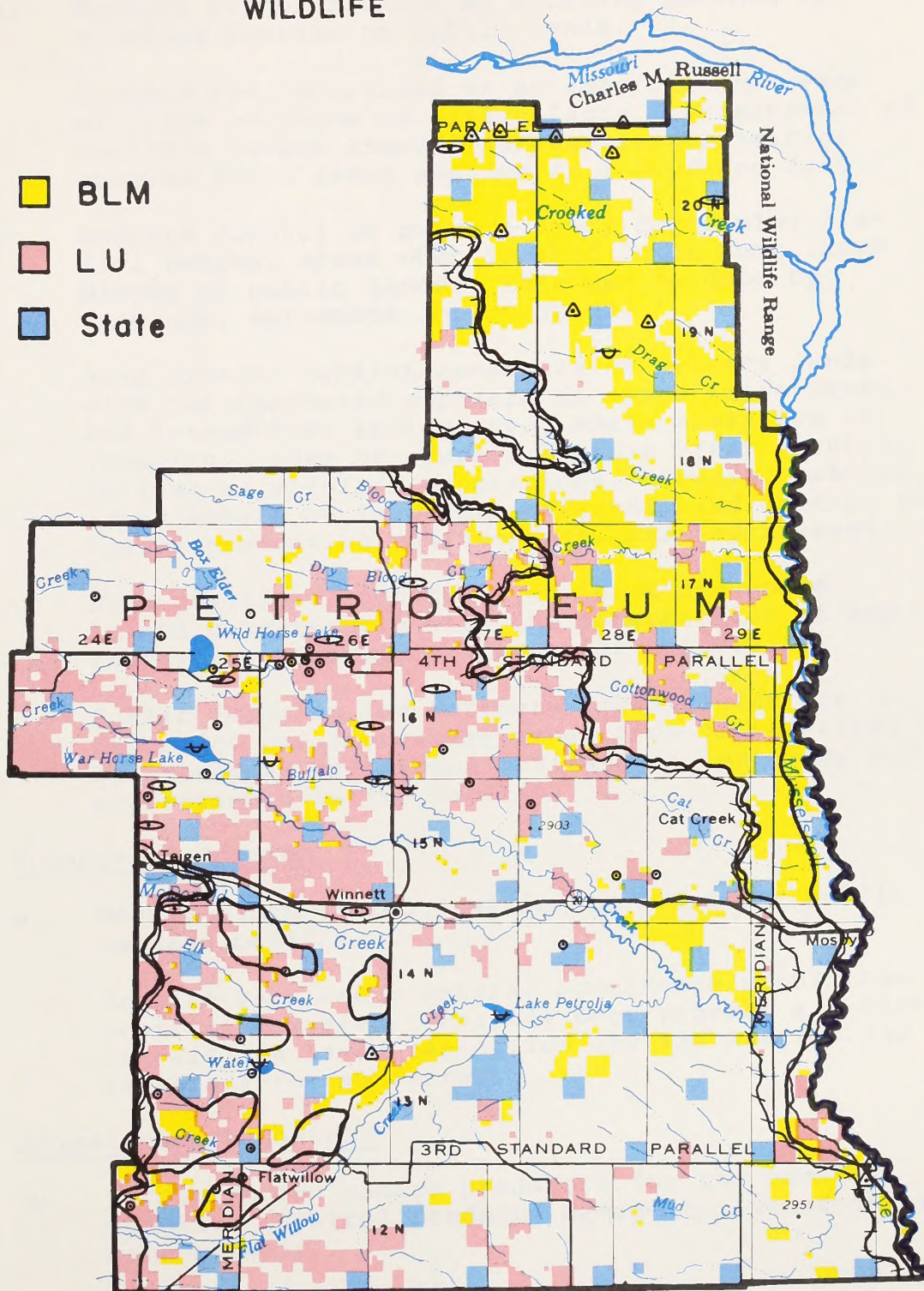
Livestock concentration about the reservoirs causes a reduction of vegetation by overgrazing and trampling. Loss of vegetation increases erosion and runoff contributing to large amounts of sediment to the reservoir. Fencing will increase vegetation; thus providing habitat for wildlife as well as reducing erosion and improving reservoir water quality.



During the spring, sage grouse (and sharp-tailed grouse) gather on their "dancing grounds" (leks) where the males strut about in their courtship display. The birds return to these areas year after year. Protection of the leks helps insure breeding and nesting success.

PETROLEUM PLANNING UNIT WILDLIFE

- BLM
- LU
- State



- PRAIRIE DOG TOWN
- EXISTING FISHERIES
- SHARP-TAIL GROUSE DANCING GROUNDS
- SAGE GROUSE STRUTTING GROUNDS
- BIG GAME HABITAT AREA
- UPLAND GAME BIRD HABITAT AREA

3. Habitat Expansion

- a. Enhance raptor habitat by creating perches in treeless terrain on public lands.

Raptors are recognized as an important non-game wildlife resource on public lands. Development of suitable ledges should increase raptor nesting success where their absence is a limiting factor.

- b. Acquire control of private lands containing crucial habitat areas when located in or near large blocks of public lands. This may be done by exchange, agreement, or purchase.

Many crucial habitat areas are on private lands. With the increased emphasis on range improvement and intensified agriculture, these areas are in jeopardy. Loss of crucial habitat often results in loss of wildlife populations. Crucial habitat areas should be in public ownership and control to insure protection, maintenance, and improvement.

- c. When practical, construct at least one goose island concurrently with the construction of new reservoirs, except for fisheries reservoirs.

Public lands in the Northern Great Plains are important for increasing production of waterfowl by providing additional habitat and improving and protecting existing habitat.

4. Endangered Species

- a. Manage black-tailed prairie dog towns for public use and benefit.

Prairie dogs are a natural occurrence within the prairie ecosystem. Prairie dogs provide a variety of wildlife based recreation and key habitat for the black-footed ferret.

5. Animal Damage Control

- a. Recognize and manage predators for the public benefit. Control predator damage to livestock or game animals.

Wildlife species commonly known as predators are necessary in the wildlife community to help maintain proper balance and variety. These animals help meet local and regional demands for wildlife based recreation. A planned approach to administration of animal damage control measures on public land will consider the welfare of the ecosystem and efforts can be directed to specific problems.

6. Herbicides

- a. Discourage the spraying of noxious weeds on public lands in those areas where they have significant values for wildlife.

Many "weed" species are important food items in the diets of big game and non-game wildlife. In addition, they provide cover for ground nesting birds, small mammals, and reptiles. Eliminating weeds in areas where they are important to wildlife will greatly reduce the habitat available by localized wildlife populations.

Environmental Overview

Management decisions and proposed actions are aimed at benefiting wildlife habitat and associated wildlife species. Decisions are directed at protecting and improving specific habitat areas, particularly critical locations such as antelope winter range and sage grouse strutting grounds. Creation of new habitat is proposed for aquatic species. Restrictions placed on other activities could cause changes in the existing way of life and mode of operations. An example would be existing fence modification to allow more antelope movement. Generally, the benefits should outweigh the adverse impacts.

RECREATION

Background

The recreation program consists of five components - recreation management, natural history, wilderness, visual, and cultural resources. This involves the inventory, identification, and protection of these values; the maintenance of any associated facilities; visitor management; and the control of recreation activities such as a fee and permit system.

The major recreational pursuits in descending order in the Petroleum Planning Unit are hunting, fishing, artifact and fossil collecting, and driving for pleasure. In comparison with a statewide survey, driving and walking for pleasure were first, sightseeing second, and fishing fourth. Though hunting is ranked eighth in statewide status, it is number one in this unit. The entire planning area provides a good range of opportunities from big game hunting in the "breaks" to bird hunting in the plains area.

Most water-based recreation activities are limited by lack of water developments on public land. A lack of good public access routes, particularly all weather roads, and the distance from major population centers minimize the amount of driving and walking use in the area.

Visual values in the Petroleum Planning Unit were identified under a visual resource management inventory (VRM) conducted in 1977. Scenic quality within the planning unit ranges from "B" to "C" - the lowest rating - and VRM management classes range from II, III, and IV. Class II is most restrictive in terms of what actions may be permitted on public lands. The Cat Creek oil field, located in the east central portion of the planning unit, borders on a Class V designation. An area determined Class V is considered an aesthetically disturbed area.

Resource Decision and Rationale

1. Visual Resource Management (VRM)

- a. Construction projects and structures will be located and built to blend in with visual class parameters. Land treatment practices would be laid out to conform with natural contours and type lines. Land surfaces disturbed by severe fires, construction work, or mineral activity will be reseeded with appropriate vegetative species to preserve the natural landscape.

The visual resource is recognized as an important element of the human environment. NEPA, FLPMA, and existing Bureau policy dictate that all public lands shall be managed to protect, maintain, enhance, and rehabilitate the visual resource. With proper planning and development, landscape changing activities can be accomplished and still enhance the visual scene.

2. Visitor Use Management

- a. Allow recreational collection of flowers, berries, nuts, seeds, cones, leaves, and similar renewable resources plus the collection of such non-renewable resources as rocks, mineral specimens, and common invertebrate fossils in reasonable quantities.

Hunting for and collecting these items is a popular recreational activity in the area. Collecting these items for personal use, consumption, or hobby interests will not damage the natural environment. Collection for commercial purposes is limited in accordance with federal regulation.

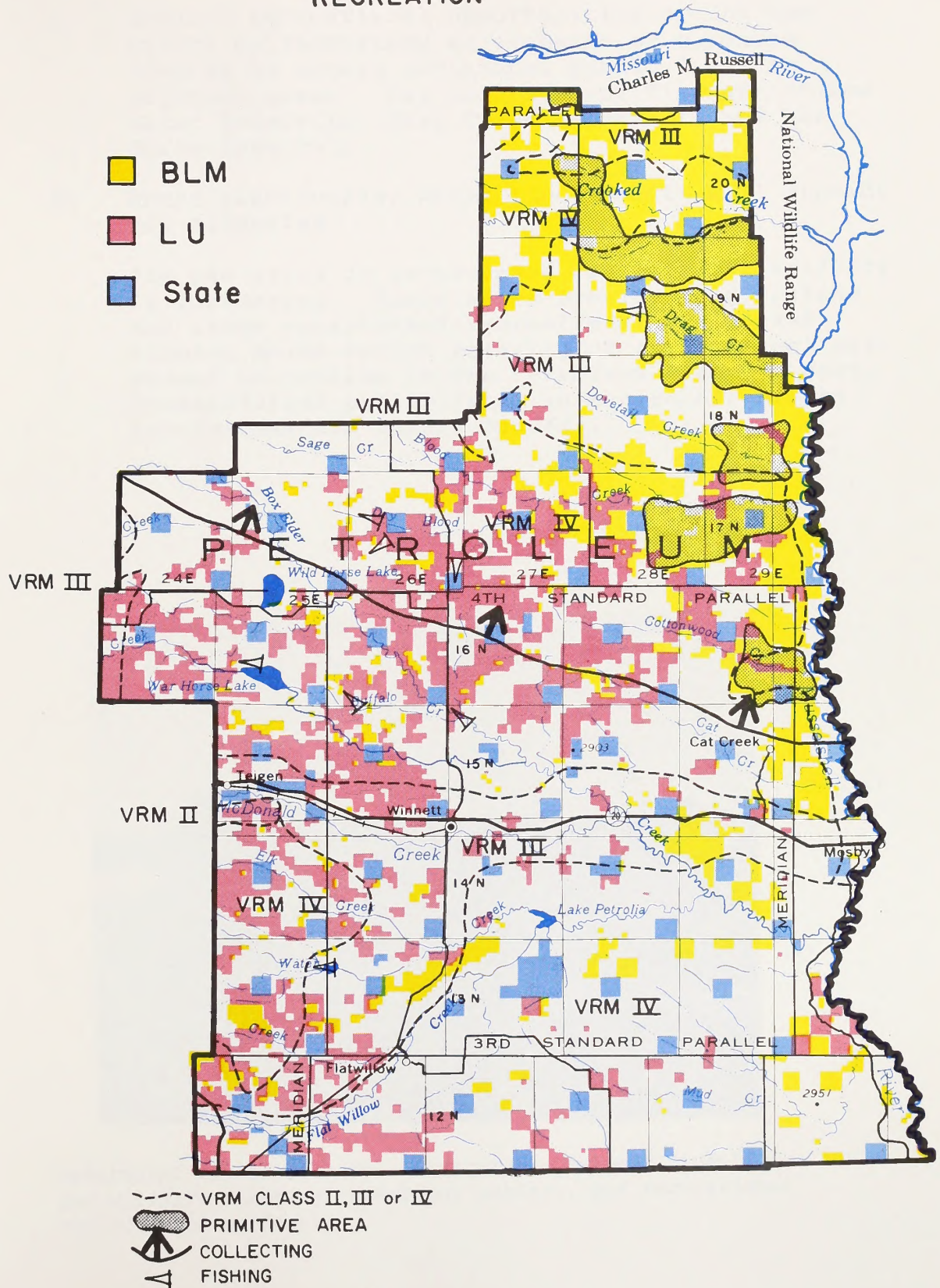
- b. Manage prairie dog towns for recreational purposes such as zoological, sightseeing, and sport hunting.

Prairie dogs are a natural occurrence within the prairie ecosystem. Prairie dogs provide a variety of wildlife based recreation and key wildlife habitat.

- c. Install land status signs (entering or leaving public lands) along access routes. Mark public land boundaries and provide area maps. Directional and informational signs should be placed on roads and at landmarks.
- d. Road easements should be obtained to all water sites and hunting areas rated with high recreational values.

Recreationists do not have adequate knowledge of where public lands are located and available access to these lands. Accurate mapping, informational and directional signs, and legal access will ensure maximum recreational benefit on public lands.

PETROLEUM PLANNING UNIT RECREATION



3. Fishing, Reservoirs

- a. Enhance recreational opportunities around key tracts by initiating an exchange or purchase program to obtain additional public lands to adjacent areas. Key tracts identified are Yellow Water Reservoir, Drag Creek Reservoir, and War Horse Reservoir.
- b. Where practicable, water impoundments will provide for fisheries.

The use trend on water-based recreational activity is increasing. These sites provide good fishing and other water-based recreational activities. Fishing holds second priority of recreational use, second to hunting in the Petroleum Planning Unit. Consolidating public lands in manageable blocks insures maximum public benefit.



Reservoirs in the unit hold a three-way value: livestock and wildlife watering, waterfowl habitat, and recreational use for area residents.

Environmental Overview

Minimal impacts are expected as a result of recreation management decisions. In general, they favor environmental protection and continuance of present lifestyles. Planned control in the authorization of surface disturbing activities and location of intrusions will preserve historic values and maintain a quality visual resource. Some restraints for protection of recreational values will no doubt cause conflicts with other uses. An example of this would be possible restrictions placed in off-road vehicle use.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Background

The cultural resources program assumes that the primary value of prehistoric and historic sites is their potential for yielding information regarding past cultural systems. Various federal regulations, including the National Historic Preservation Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and Executive Order 11593, provide directives for BLM's cultural resources program. The general objectives of the program are identification, preservation, and utilization of significant sites and information.

Little information exists concerning the planning unit's prehistory. Artifacts dated as belonging to the Early Prehistoric Period (10,000 B.C. to 5,500 B.C.) have been found in similar areas of the Northern Great Plains. Potential for discovery of prehistoric sites within the planning unit is good. Recommendations for inventory and research of cultural sites have been approved as decisions and are summarized on the following pages.

A class II inventory was conducted in the Petroleum Planning Unit in 1977. Over five percent (5.6%) of the acreage of public lands was surveyed. Class III inventory work has been restricted to small environmental assessments. The majority of these archaeological sites have been in the Cat Creek oil field and involve less than one acre each.

Resource Decision and Rationale

1. Inventory and Research

- a. Continue cultural sites inventory on public lands at 5% statistical sample per year rate.

The inventory will provide the Bureau with baseline data in the form of identifications and preliminary evaluations of the planning unit's cultural resources. The inventory will also enable the Bureau to meet the needs of various scientific and/or educational groups by supplying research data related to the concerns of history, anthropology, archaeology, geography, paleontology, and geology.



Since the arrival of the first settlers in the 1800s, most historic events in the area have been well documented. Fur trappers and traders and the Lewis and Clark expedition opened the area, followed by the Indian campaigns of the U.S. Army. During this time, open range livestock outfits and homesteaders settled in the area.

- b. Investigate certain identified cultural resource sites by archaeological excavation and analysis. Prepare interpretative projects for public enjoyment and collect information from local people having knowledge of the area's cultural resources.

Investigations lead to interpretative synthesis which are of value to the scientific community and the general public. They are also educational to artifact and relic collectors by illustrating why undisturbed cultural sites are important and necessary to understanding an area's early history and prehistory. The public can also become involved in and contribute to these investigations.

2. Protection

- a. Monitor, protect, and/or mitigate archaeological, historical, and paleontological sites which are subject to erosion, vandalism, and surface disturbing projects. Commence and continue surveillance, construct physical barriers, or undertake salvage excavations as protection and/or mitigation measures.

The sensitivity of cultural resources to damage and disturbance requires that they be monitored. Surveillance will decrease the vandalism and provide data for trend analysis. Physical barriers may reduce or halt a disturbing agent such as livestock trampling or vehicle traffic. Salvage excavations will allow a cultural resource to be scientifically studied before it is totally destroyed.

- b. Cultural resources which appear qualified will be nominated to the National Register. Activity plans will be prepared for National Register sites.

The Bureau is required by national policy and law to nominate qualified sites for the National Register. Activity plans ensure that National Register sites are maintained and available for public enjoyment.

Environmental Overview

Negligible impacts are expected as a result of the cultural resources management decisions. In general, these decisions favor protection and further study of cultural resources.

Interrelationships With Other Plans

The C. M. Russell National Wildlife Range (CMRNWR), managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), borders a significant part of the Petroleum Planning Unit.

The Management Framework Plan (MFP) decisions, as outlined here, do not deal with the CMRNWR. However, the need for coordination of activity plans (especially grazing plans) between the BLM and USFWS is obvious. A new planning effort on the game range is being initiated by USFWS. As their decisions are finalized, cooperation between the two agencies will insure sound management of all public lands in the area.

A Soil Conservation District Plan for Petroleum County may create conflicts in sagebrush and weed control. Generally, cooperation has existed with both the SCS and local soil conservation districts when resource action plans, such as AMPs, are being developed.

No county land use or zoning plan has been prepared for Petroleum County. Adjustment of some decisions, especially in the lands activity, may be necessary if a plan is developed.

Actions After the MFP

The finalized Management Framework Plan is the basis for on-the-ground actions in the Petroleum Planning Unit. These actions will be subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, except for those which are non-discretionary due to other laws (i.e., wilderness review/withdrawal, and endangered species protection).

Environmental assessments will address the environmental, wilderness, and socio-economic impacts of each proposed action, providing basis for its acceptance, modification, or rejection. The implementation of allotment management plans and issuance of BLM grazing licenses/permits will be the subject of the "Missouri River Breaks Grazing Environmental Statement," scheduled for completion in August 1979 by BLM Montana State Office, Branch of Environmental Coordination.

It may be some time before some of these MFP decisions are carried out, since on-the-ground actions to be initiated by BLM depend on Congressional funding. Implementation is also dependent upon completion of wilderness review as required by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA).

Any major changes in this plan will be subject to public review and comment. It is anticipated that this plan will provide the basis for resource management to both the District and Resource Area staffs for approximately ten years. A program of resource inventory will continue to monitor any changes which may lead to modification of resource use. Significant changes in federal, state, or public policy or attitudes may also cause revision of this Management Framework Plan.

MONTANA BLM ORGANIZATION

The Bureau's work in Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota is administered from a State Office headquarters located in Billings, Montana. Within these three states, the 8.4 million surface acres and 55 million* subsurface acres of public lands are further divided administratively into four districts with District Offices in Butte, Lewistown, and Miles City; and Dickinson, North Dakota. Each District is divided into Resource Areas to facilitate day to day administration and long term management on a multiple use basis.

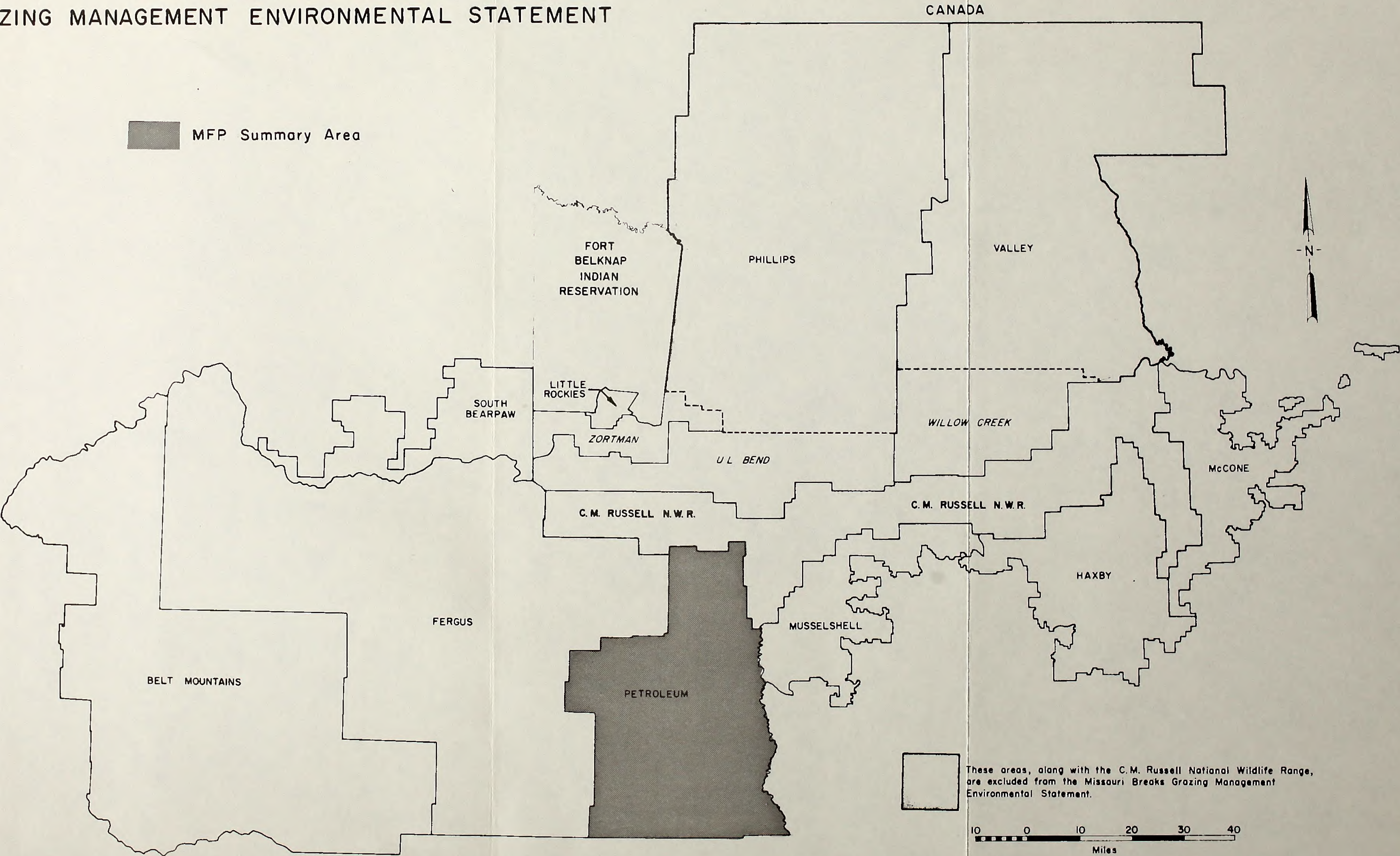
The surface and subsurface acreages administered by the four BLM Districts are noted in the table below:

ACREAGE STATISTICS MONTANA BLM ORGANIZATION

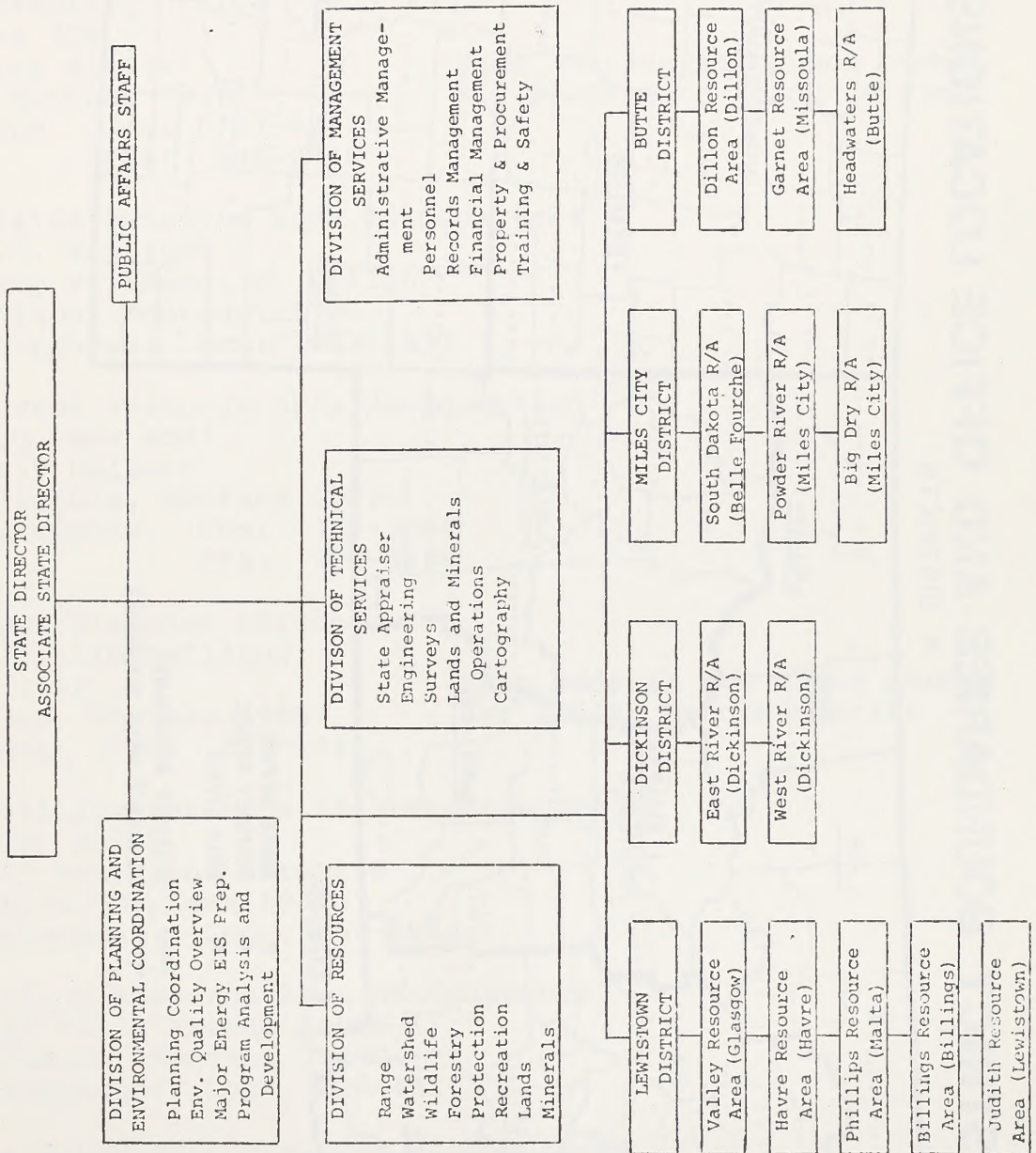
DISTRICT	SURFACE OWNERSHIP		SUBSURFACE OWNERSHIP		TOTAL ALL OWNERSHIP
	BLM	OTHER	BLM	OTHER	
Butte	1,334,000	33,456,400	2,285,345	32,505,054	34,790,400
Lewistown	3,884,701	33,167,885	8,177,983	28,879,603	37,057,586
Miles City Montana	2,785,299	17,363,119	10,910,741	9,237,677	20,148,418
S.Dakota	276,000	48,335,200	800,000	47,811,200	48,611,200
Dickinson	68,000	44,266,720	4,968,000	39,366,720	44,334,720

*BLM directly administers approximately 28 million acres of mineral estate and is the leasing agent to an additional 27 million acres of land administered by other federal agencies.

MISSOURI RIVER BREAKS
GRAZING MANAGEMENT ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

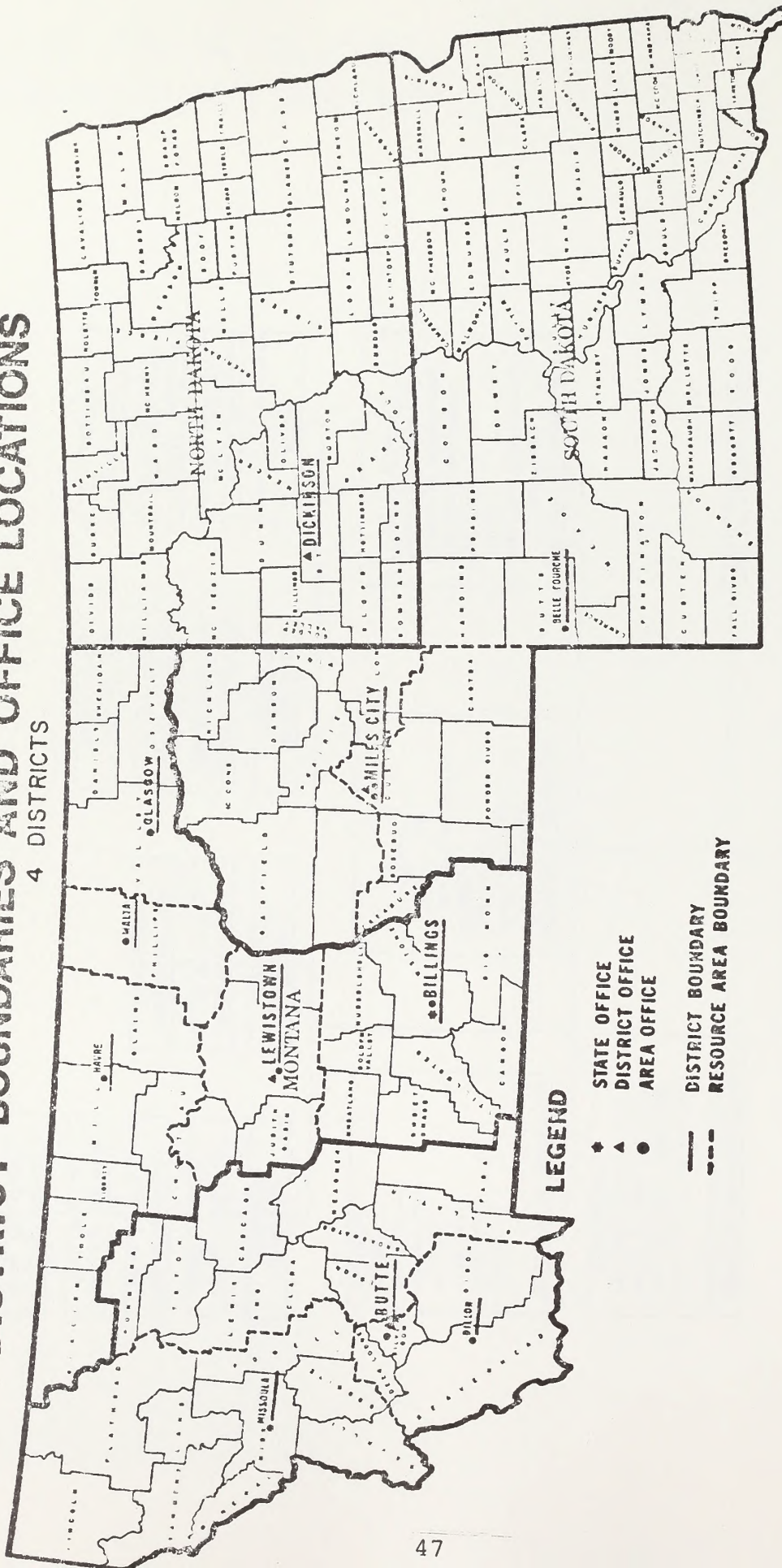


These areas, along with the C.M. Russell National Wildlife Range, are excluded from the Missouri Breaks Grazing Management Environmental Statement.



DISTRICT BOUNDARIES AND OFFICE LOCATIONS

4 DISTRICTS



ADDRESSES
Montana BLM Organization

Montana State Office
222 North 32 Street
P.O. Box 30157
Billings, Montana 59101
Telephone: Com: 657-6561
FTS: 585-6561

Butte District Office
P.O. Box 308
220 North Alaska (Same address and phone number
Butte, Montana 59701 for Headwaters Resource Area)
Telephone: Com: 723-6561
FTS: 585-2416

Dillon Resource Area Headquarters
P.O. Box 1048
Ibey Building, N. Dillon
Dillon, Montana 59725
Telephone: Com: 683-2337

Garnet Resource Area Headquarters
P.O. Box 4427
1819 Holborn
Missoula, Montana 59801
Telephone: Com: 329-3686
FTS: 585-3686

Lewistown District Office
Bank Electric Building
Drawer 1160 (Same address and phone number
Lewistown, Montana 59457 for Judith Resource Area)
Telephone: Com: 538-7461

Phillips Resource Area Headquarters
P.O. Box B
501 South 2nd Street E
Malta, Montana 59538
Telephone: Com: 654-1240

Valley Resource Area Headquarters
626 Third Avenue South
Glasgow, Montana 59230
Telephone: Com: 228-4316

Billings Resource Area Headquarters
810 E. Main Street
Billings, Montana 59101
Telephone: Com: 657-6262
FTS: 585-6262

Havre Resource Area Headquarters
Post Office Building
Drawer 911
Havre, Montana 59501
Telephone: Com: 265-5891

Miles City District Office
P.O. Box 940
West of Miles City
Miles City, Montana 59310
Telephone: Com: 232-4331

(Same address and phone number
for Powder River and Big Dry
Resource Areas)

South Dakota Resource Area Headquarters
310 Roundup Street
Belle Fourche, South Dakota 57717
Telephone: Com: 892-2526

Dickinson District Office
P.O. Box 1229
Pulver Hall
Dickinson, North Dakota 58601
Telephone: Com: 225-9148

ACTIVITY PLAN. Detailed action plans for specific program activities. Examples include Allotment Management Plans, Habitat Management Plans, Recreation Site Development Plans, etc.

AESTHETICS. Dealing with the sense of the beautiful and with judgments concerning beauty.

ALLOTMENT (GRAZING ALLOTMENT). An area of land where one or more individuals graze their livestock. It generally consists of BLM lands but may include parcels of private or state owned lands. The number of livestock and season(s) of use are stipulated for each allotment. An allotment may consist of several pastures or be only one pasture.

ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN (AMP). A concisely written program of livestock grazing management, including supportive measures if required, designed to attain specific management goals in a grazing allotment.

ANIMAL UNIT MONTH. A standardized unit of measurement of the amount of forage necessary for the complete sustenance of one animal unit for a period of one month; also a unit of measurement of grazing privileges which represents the privilege of grazing one animal unit for a period of one month.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SITE. Site which contains objects of antiquity or cultural values relating to history, or prehistory.

CULTURAL RESOURCES. A term that includes resources of historical, archaeological, or architectural significance, which are fragile, limited, and nonrenewable portions of the human environment.

DEFERRED ROTATION GRAZING. The discontinuance of livestock grazing on various parts of a range in succeeding years, allowing each part to rest successively during the growing season to permit seed production, establishment of seedlings, or restoration of plant vigor.

ECOLOGY. A study of animals and plants in their relation to each other and to their environment.

ENDANGERED OR THREATENED STATUS. Determined for plants and animals by any one or a combination of the following factors: (1) the present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range; (2) overutilization for commercial, sporting, scientific or educational purposes; (3) disease or predation; (4) the adequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; or (5) other natural or man-made factors affecting its continued existence.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT RECORD (EAR). A concisely written record of environmental factors in land management actions.

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT (ES). A written analysis of the impacts of a proposed project (e.g., grazing program) on the environment.

EXCLOSURES. An area protected (usually by fences) against the entrance of unwanted animals.

FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1976 (FLPMA). Public Law 94-579, October 21, 1976, often referred to as the BLM "Organic Act" which provides the majority of BLM's legislated authority, direction, policy and basic management guidance.

FORAGE ALLOCATION. The percent of average annual forage production allocated in the land use decision process to a given activity (i.e., domestic livestock wildlife, water protection and enhancement, wild and free-roaming horses and burros).

IMPACT. Negative or positive effects on social, economic, institutional, environmental and other resource values.

LAND USE DECISIONS. Resource allocations which resolve on-the-ground conflicts generated by attempting to fully implement all activities on the same general area of land. The decision reflects social, economic, environmental, political, and interagency considerations.

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN (MFP). A planning decision document which establishes, for a given planning area, land use allocations, coordination guidelines for multiple use, and management objectives to be achieved for each class of land use or protection. It is the Bureau's land use plan. It is prepared in three steps: Step 1 - Resource Recommendations; Step 2 - Impact Analysis and Alternative Development; and Step 3 - Decisionmaking.

MULTIPLE USE MANAGEMENT. Coordinated management of the various surface and sub-surface resources, without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land, that will best meet the present and future needs of the people.

NON-DISCRETIONARY. Actions required by federal law, court or Executive Order, i.e., protection of designated, endangered, or threatened plants and animals, protection of designated historical or archaeological sites, etc.

PALEONTOLOGICAL SITE. Areas with known evidence of prehistoric forms of life (plant and animal fossils).

PLANNING UNIT. A geographic unit within a Bureau of Land Management district which includes related lands, resources, and use pressure problems which are considered together for resource inventory and planning.

RAPTORS. A functional group of birds including all birds of prey, such as the eagle, hawk, owl, and vulture.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION. See LAND USE DECISION.

REST ROTATION GRAZING SYSTEM. A grazing system providing for systematic and sequential grazing by livestock and resting from livestock use on a range area to provide for the production of livestock while simultaneously maintaining or improving the vegetation and soil fertility.

RIPARIAN. Situated on or pertaining to the bank of a river, stream or other body of water.

SUSTAINED YIELD. The achievement and maintenance in perpetuity of a high-level annual or regular periodic output of the various renewable resources of the public lands consistent with multiple use.

WATERSHED. A basin or region draining into a creek, stream, river, river system, or body of water.

WITHDRAWAL. An action which withdraws described public lands from operation of certain laws which are also described in the withdrawal order.

Form 1279-3
(June 1984)

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Management framework
planning unit summary

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Bureau of Land Management
Library
Bldg. 50, Denver Federal Center
Denver, CO 80225

